

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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HURRICANE RITA BRINGS WINDS OF CHANGE TO U.S. ENERGY POLICY?

Automakers Push the White House for New Alternatives, Bipartisan Support Grows for Higher Fuel Efficiency Standards as Debate Starts on Another Energy Bill

Washington, DC: The lashings of Hurricane Katrina and Rita have brought the winds of change in how Americans and companies are thinking about energy efficiency. The *Wall Street Journal* reports today that the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Ford Motor company sent a letter to President Bush requesting that the President hold an energy summit involving auto makers, suppliers, fuel providers, consumers and government officials to discuss solutions for alternative fuel resources and other issues. Ford is not alone. Representatives from General Motors and Toyota have also called for a policy which decreases dependency on foreign oil.

Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior Member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and a long-time advocate for higher fuel economy standards, today made the following statement in response to recent pressure on the White House to reduce U.S. dependency on foreign oil.

"Americans are foreign oil addicts. Consumers and companies alike now agree that we need to take concrete steps to reduce of dependency on foreign oil. When will the President agree to put the interests of the American people ahead of Big Oil?" said Rep. Markey.

Rep. Markey is the co-sponsor of a bill to increase the fuel efficiency standards of cars from 25 miles per gallon to 33 miles per gallon over the next ten years, and has offered several similar Committee and Floor amendments during the last several Congresses.

"Just one month after we passed a national energy bill, we are starting all over again because the Energy Policy Act of 2005 did nothing to reduce our dependency on foreign oil or relieve the burden of consumers at the pump," said Rep. Markey. "The very same giveaways to oil refineries that didn't make it into the energy bill are back on the table for the Energy Bill - Part II. The oil refineries that have seen a 255% increase in profits this year are looking to "streamline" permitting and rack up new tax breaks," said Markey.

"The fuel efficiency standards of cars and trucks on the road are getting worse. We cannot pass another energy bill that neglects to address our dependency on foreign oil -- that is why I will be offering an amendment that would increase the fuel efficiency of cars by at least 8 miles per gallon by 2016. If we can put a man on the moon, create the internet and sequence the human genome, surely we can build a more fuel efficient car in the next ten years," Markey concluded.

The Bush Administration recently called for an insignificant and unenforceable CAFE increase for SUVs and light trucks by 2010, ignoring expert reports indicating that far more meaningful steps could be taken without sacrificing vehicle safety or performance.

For more information regarding the Rep. Markey's work in the area of energy and the environment, please see www.house.gov/markey.